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THE COMMUNICATOR

The USAID PHN Newsletter for CAs

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The Communicator's Goals:

- * To increase the flow of information between USAID's Bureau for Global Health and CAs engaged in communications and public relations work
- * To enhance awareness of the need to disseminate news about our work and to show why it is important

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If you would like back issues of The Communicator, e-mail lhomiak@phn.pal-tech.com.

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WE'D LIKE YOUR HELP

The Bureau for Global Health at USAID, headed by Assistant Administrator Anne Peterson, is collecting success stories about our work into a single, consolidated, searchable database. The idea behind the database is to help Anne, Duff, Margaret, and others here at USAID who speak to Congress, the press, Capitol Hill representatives, and other constituencies to quickly and efficiently access success stories to share with these audiences. Keeping our database fresh, current, and full of stories is vital to communicating both our work and the good we do. We encourage you to draw from briefs you are already writing or have written and send information to us so we can add it to this database (sample blurbs below). If you have an interesting conversation with the mission about some impressive statistics evidencing progress or improvement, type it up in a quick e-mail and pass it along. You know how important it is to communicate the progress of our programs and the deep impacts they can make in the communities where

we work. So please send us your stories! They will be used ... and to prove it, we'll track the use here on these pages.

Success Story Example 1: Adolescent Health and Health System Strengthening in Jamaica

USAID's Mission in Jamaica established three youth-friendly sites in 2000 - one is school-linked, one part of a wellness center, and the third is located at a YMCA. The openings marked a milestone in increasing youth access to quality health services. The package of services includes pregnancy testing and contraceptives; STI diagnosis; and HIV counseling, testing, and referral. The youth centers opened after much work in methodical research, staff training, and community youth involvement, all of which were critical to their success. Service utilization data for the first three months following the opening of the wellness center-based clinic showed an increase from 69 counseled in the first month to 105 in the third month. In addition, three grants have been approved to implement and administer educational seminars on adolescent reproductive health (ARH) for men, to provide counseling and ARH services with a special emphasis on reaching out-of-school youths, and to incorporate ARH and sexuality in counseling through a 24-hour hotline service.

Success Story Example 2: Small-Scale Water Systems Deliver Primary Health Care in Bolivia

Project Concern International (PCI), a US PVO, works in some of the poorest parts of Bolivia to install small-scale water systems and deliver primary health care. Northern Potosi, on Bolivia's harsh altiplano, is one such place. Potosi is Bolivia's poorest department. Residents of the community of Churiparara comment on how the water system has improved their lives:

Before, people used to get sick with cholera and diarrhea. Many women and other adults died of fever. They drank the water that animals drank, and they drank water from the Juntavi River and from some wells where toads lived. Ever since we have running water, people don't drink from the river or the well.

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HOW PUBLIC SERVICE ADS COULD BE GREATLY IMPROVED

Andy Goodman, an independent communications consultant who focuses on public-interest groups and foundations, recently issued a new report claiming that public service advertising is not connecting effectively with consumers (at least in print form). The report, entitled "Why Bad Ads Happen to Good Causes and How to Ensure They Won't Happen to Yours," examines 195 public-interest print ads followed by seven guidelines for creating more effective ones. Philip Sawyer, senior vice president and director at the Starch division of Roper ASW, which conducted the study and provided the guidelines, said "those of us who feel deeply about causes recognize that there is a huge opportunity for them to do better advertising and also recognize that they had missed an opportunity by not creating more powerful advertising."

To view the entire article visit
<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/05/08/business/media/08ADCO.html>

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WEB RESOURCES FOR YOU

Lock-In Website Freshness: How to Keep Producing Great Content for your Website
Sites stay fresh with simple planning.

1. Develop a thorough Website Style Guide to ensure all contributions remain consistent with the purpose and tone of your website. Include preferred word counts, use of subheadings and pull quotes, identity-oriented language, and notes about the purpose and target audience of the different sections/pages of your site.
2. Delegate content production. Assemble a team of contributors from your organization to write commentary, event previews, project updates, and background papers on new developments about the issues you address.
3. Use what you already produce. A lot of website content can be adapted from print newsletters, project updates, event calendars, action alerts, press releases, and media coverage. Then, it's just a matter of some editing and restructuring to match the format you established in your Website Style Guide.
4. Keep a strict update schedule -- weekly, twice monthly, or monthly. Bring out your inner newsroom editor, and keep your deadlines strict. As incentive for timely contributions, inform your team of the page hits that they could miss if their contribution is not received in time. They'll quickly start to see the value.
5. Remove out-of-date material -- or remove dates once they've past. Even though your key messages and call-to-action may still be relevant, a page dated from six months ago will look like old news and be less valued by your readers. Except for press releases, everything on your site should read as if current.
6. Check verb tense on event commentaries and picture captions. Compare the picture caption "The team gathered supporters at November's rally" to "The team gathers support at the Sunday rally," which moves the reader from the past into the present and raises the possibility for the future.
7. Limit your site size to what you can maintain. And, if you're diligent at adding new content to your site on a regular basis, do a thorough usability analysis every six months to ensure your site architecture is still making sense with all your new pages.

Just remember that your website is a place where people who care about your work go to find information. Think of that audience as "readers" rather than "visitors" or "users" and you'll quickly appreciate the need to keep adding good, fresh, engaging content to your website.

To view these recommendations go to <http://www.impacs.org>

Typos, Bad Links Top Website Problem List

A recent survey performed by Stanford University's Persuasive Technology Lab and sponsored by the US-based PR firm Makovsky & Company indicated that something as minor as a spelling mistake on a corporation's website can damage the company's credibility. The research included a survey of 1600 American as well as European internet users who were instructed to find out indicators that can damage the value of a website. The results of the study showed that typographical errors and links that don't work are the most damaging to a site's legitimacy. Other negative factors included pop-up ads and lack of distinction between advertising and content. Moreover, a number of cultural differences were exposed in the survey. Unlike European users, Americans seem to provide greater trust in sites providing valid content and privacy statements. Makovsky & Company sponsored the survey to help clients and prospects see why the web, as a communications tool, needs to be managed closely.

[SOURCE: PRWeek, AUTHOR: Julia Hood]

Blogging, the Great Untapped Resource

"Weblogs" or "blogs" are regularly updated online personal journals (written by "bloggers") with links to items of interest on the web. These often ignored online resources allow for companies and clients to monitor what is being said online about them and are easier to follow than discussion forums, chat rooms, and consumer opinion sites. The current estimate for existing blogs is 500,000 and most of these were set up with special software, such as Pyra's Blogger, Pitas.com, and Userland Software's Manilasites.

Many participants and commentators equate blogs to journalism without the restrictions set forth by publishers. Rebecca Blood, author of *The Weblog Handbook*, explains that webloggers are to some extent mavericks as they build their reputation through a combination of links, commentary, and personality.

In light of this, how can one monitor blogs? One way to do this is to look up a company or brand name periodically via Google.com. Another is to use a blog search engine such as blogger.com or portal.eatonweb.com and list keywords for the organization which is searched. Once in the blogs, search for cross-references, as the best and most popular items are linked to from many other sites.

Here are some DO's:

- 1.DO take blogs seriously. Find those that seem to be most relevant, bookmark them, and read them regularly.
- 2.DO act fast. If you need to respond to something on a blog, do so quickly and honestly. Similarly, if you are writing an organizational blog, make sure it is very up-to-date.
- 3.DO be honest about corporate involvement with a blog. If you leave it up to readers to find out for themselves, it will seriously erode the reputation of the blogger and the company.

...and the DON'T's:

1.DON'T ignore blogs, or lump them in with general chat rooms, or assume they have no influence. This is intelligent and informed opinion sharing.

2.DON'T dismiss requests for interviews and information from bloggers. Many are also established journalists, and if they are unhappy with your attitude, you may find your e-mail exchange published in full on their site, something that happened to Edelman Public Relations last year.

[SOURCE: PRWeek]

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REPROLINE®

ReproLine® (Reproductive Health Online) is a website developed and maintained by JHPIEGO addressing the needs of health care professionals, particularly those who have completed JHPIEGO training courses. The site is organized into six subtopics: 1. Family Planning, 2. Maternal and Neonatal Health, 3. Cervical Cancer, 4. Related Health Topics, 5. Tools for Trainers, 6. Reading Room, providing health care professionals and visitors with both tools and information/communications forums. The site also features REPRONET-L, a discussion group around the world that communicates through e-mail.

To learn more about ReproLine® and REPRONET-L, visit <http://www.reproline.jhu.edu>

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POPTECH

POPTECH (The Population Technical Assistance Project) provides technical assistance to USAID's population and reproductive health programs and is supported by the Bureau for Global Health. POPTECH's website contains resource and background information for USAID staff, consultants, and all others interested in issues pertaining to population, health, and nutrition. The site also includes FEATURES, a newsletter providing information about country-specific programs, reports, and evaluations sponsored by USAID and CAs.

To find out more about POPTECH or to read FEATURES, go to <http://www.poptechproject.com>

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WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING

JHPIEGO: Care of Women with HIV Living in Limited-Resource Settings

JHPIEGO Corporation, in cooperation with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and USAID, developed training and education programs on the care of women with HIV as a response to the international HIV/AIDS epidemic. The first

product of this joint effort is a series of tutorials designed to provide physicians, faculty, and health care trainers with technical knowledge necessary to deliver high-quality health care services to women with HIV/AIDS and to train other health care providers.

Currently, 11 tutorials have been developed covering the following topics:

- *Overview
- *Prevention
- *Voluntary Counseling and Testing
- *Reproductive Health
- *HIV and Pregnancy
- *HIV and Breastfeeding
- *HIV and Nutrition: An Overview
- *HIV and Nutrition: Care and Support
- *Antiretroviral Therapy
- *Antiretroviral Therapy During Pregnancy
- *HIV and Tuberculosis

To get a copy of the tutorials or to learn more about them, visit:

<http://www.reproline.jhu.edu>

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YOUR FEEDBACK

With your participation this newsletter can increase our interaction and participation in getting the word out about what we do. Let us know what you would like to see in this newsletter, what topics you want covered, or what additional items should be included to make it. We also encourage you to become a contributor -- pass along stories about your program, including poignant accounts, major accomplishments, new publications, awards received, or upcoming conferences, to Ichomiak@phn.pal-tech.com.

Also, if you know people who should get this newsletter, let us know so we can add them to our subscribers list.

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